

VZCZCXYZ0000
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHAK #1866/01 2011505
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
O 201505Z JUL 07
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3078
INFO RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC//USDP:PDUSDP/ISA:EUR/ISA:NESA/DSCA//
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD PRIORITY 0999
RUEUITH/AFOSI DET 521 ANKARA TU PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC//J-3/J-5// PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU PRIORITY
RUEHAK/USDAO ANKARA TU PRIORITY

S E C R E T ANKARA 001866

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

OSD FOR GENERAL COUNSEL HAYNES FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/19/2022

TAGS: PGOV PREL MARR PTER IZ TU

SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR THE VISIT OF DOD GENERAL COUNSEL HAYNES TO ANKARA

REF: A. ANKARA 1464

1B. 06 ANKARA 6720

1C. 06 ANKARA 3433 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Ambassador Ross Wilson for reasons 1.4 (b,d).

¶1. (S) Summary: Your July 25 visit will come right after Sunday's parliamentary elections here. Allegations regarding U.S. arms in Iraq going to the Kurdish PKK terrorist organization have featured prominently during the campaign to portray the AKP government as soft on terrorism. PM Erdogan and FM Gul have been vague in their public statements, thereby perpetuating press interest in the story. Your visit will provide some transparency to the Turks about the issue and steps we are taking to address it. In your meetings with MFA Undersecretary Apakan and Deputy Chief of Defense Gen Saygun, I recommend you provide a broad overview of the facts and our remedial steps. Your meeting with Turkish National Police (TNP) Director General Koksal provides an opportunity for a more thorough review with Turkey's law enforcement officials. End Summary

¶2. (S) Since early 2006, the Turkish government has expressed to us concern over weapons delivered by the U.S. to Iraqi security forces being diverted to Turkey. Such weapons have been used in high profile murders, including that of an Italian priest in Trabzon in February 2006, a senior court judge in May 2006, and a police officer in Izmir. The GOT provided serial numbers of over 600 Glock pistols which they seized, which correspond to weapons provided by the U.S. to Iraq in 2003-2004. Subsequently, the Foreign Ministry and police authorities provided information on other small arms and rocket launchers seized in Turkey and believed to be of U.S.-origin. Most recently, military and government officials have inquired about planned U.S. sales to Iraq of large quantities of weapons, ammunition, and plastic explosives. While focused on the criminal use of these weapons, Turkish authorities have told us they believe the PKK terrorist organization is deeply involved in trafficking them.

¶3. (C) The media paid little attention to the issue until recently. However, in early July, newspapers reported the "confession" of three captured PKK terrorists, who claimed that U.S. military officials delivered arms directly to PKK redoubts in the Kandil mountains of northern Iraq. We have

denied the allegation, both publicly and in our private discussions with Turkish officials. On July 11, Turkey's ambassador to the U.S., Nabi Sensoy, briefed the Washington press that the PKK was obtaining U.S.-origin weapons from Kurdish authorities in northern Iraq. Other press reports have us providing arms secretly to the Kurdish Free Life Party (PJAK), the PKK's arm that operates against Iran, which then get transferred to the mothership. We have also denied contact with PJAK.

¶4. (C) A related set of stories asserts that U.S. military personnel, including "deserters" from Iraq, are engaged in providing weapons either directly to the PKK or indirectly through Kurdish authorities in northern Iraq. Other reports focus on U.S. procurement malfeasance in providing weapons to Iraq, resulting in inadvertent leakage to PKK and criminal elements.

¶5. (C) While senior officials have downplayed these extravagant allegations in private talks with us, PM Erdogan and FM Gul have been less than helpful in their public statements in the midst of an election campaign. Erdogan publicly termed our denials of responsibility for U.S. weapons in PKK hands as "unconvincing." While stating that he does not believe the U.S. deliberately gives weapons to the PKK, FM Gul has said that if we did, it would be very damaging. He asserted that the Iraqi army is unreliable, that corruption on the part of some U.S. military personnel has contributed to weapons ending up in PKK hands, and that the Pentagon is investigating the matter. Gul has reportedly claimed that Turkey has found 1260 suspected U.S.-origin weapons in the possession of PKK terrorists.

¶6. (C) Senior military officers also downplay these stories in private conversations with us. However, we see evidence that, behind the scenes, the military is tolerating or even encouraging public suspicions of U.S. collusion with the PKK as a way to embarrass the government and to maintain pressure on the U.S. to take action against the PKK in northern Iraq.

¶7. (C) We hope, but cannot guarantee, that the political environment following July 22 elections will be more conducive to a rational discussion of the issue of U.S. arms in PKK hands, as well as their use by criminal elements in Turkey. Greater transparency regarding the facts will be helpful. We must also convince the Turks that we are instituting measures and controls that will minimize the possibility that the military equipment we are now providing to Iraq will find its way into Turkey.

Visit Ankara's Classified Web Site at
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/ankara/>

WILSON